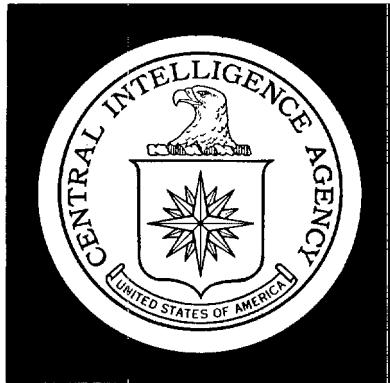


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Cambodia: Sihanouk is embarking on a campaign to undermine the viability of the new government.

From Peking, Sihanouk broadcast a message to the Cambodian people on 23 March calling for the establishment of a "government of national unity" and a "national liberation army" to overthrow the "reactionary fascists." He promised arms and ammunition to his followers and claimed that a "military school" would be established to provide training. He stated that "formal support" from socialist countries would be forthcoming, and implied the struggle would be undertaken in cooperation with Communist forces.

Many points in the statement may represent Sihanouk theatrics. The heavy use of Communist jargon, however, and the fact that it was issued in Peking, probably with the blessing of North Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong who is in the Chinese capital, strongly suggest the Communists are backing Sihanouk's current maneuver. A Hanoi domestic broadcast on 23 March, commenting on Sihanouk's earlier statement regarding the "illegality" of the Phnom Penh leadership, voiced support for Sihanouk's efforts to get rid of the "coup makers."

Despite the evidence of support, it is not clear how far Hanoi is willing to go at present to support Sihanouk against the new regime in Phnom Penh. The Communists may hope that Sihanouk's statements will create a climate of doubt and dissension among the new government's backers that could shake the resolve of Lon Nol and Sirik Matak.

Hanoi may also hope that the "support" already given Sihanouk will cause Lon Nol and Matak to accommodate Communist interests in Cambodia. Recent statements by Lon Nol suggest that Phnom Penh's anti-Vietnamese rhetoric is now giving way to a more sober appreciation of the problems Cambodia faces. If he and Matak do not give way, however, the existence of a Sihanouk-led "liberation movement" provides the Communists with the cover for more forceful measures.

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Tunisia: The prolonged absence of President Bourguiba and Prime Minister Ladgham's lack of dynamism are contributing to a pervasive uneasiness.

Bourguiba's long convalescence since stricken with hepatitis last May has caused speculation on the actual state of his health. [redacted]

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[redacted] he has been under continuous treatment and, in mid-November, went to France for further treatment and rest.

The speculation has not been dispelled by a recent announcement that Bourguiba would return home in April. [redacted]

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Ladgham is taking steps, however, to revitalize the Destourian Socialist Party, the country's only political party and the organization used to whip up support for government policies. [redacted]

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[redacted]
[redacted]

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Albania: The government has moved further from its isolation by requesting diplomatic and economic ties with five NATO countries.

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[redacted] This is a continuation of its attempts to achieve greater political flexibility and satisfy the requirements of its growing economy, which can no longer be met by Peking alone.

The initiatives thus far have not produced strains in the Sino-Albanian axis nor do they indicate any change in Tirana's ideological orientation.

Initial response to the Albanian overtures is generally favorable, with Copenhagen and Oslo the most receptive. Although it has been considered, a resumption of Greek-Albanian relations is only a long-range possibility. The two states are technically still at war, and the Greek claim to southern Albania is a major stumbling block. Athens and Tirana are making progress, however, in restoring economic ties.

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Congo (Brazzaville): President Ngouabi's regime remains in control following the failure yesterday of a coup by a small band of Congo (Kinshasa)-based exiles. The plotters pleaded in vain for help from Kinshasa and other neighboring countries over Radio Brazzaville, which they held for about two hours. Although the incident is likely eventually to sow more discord between Ngouabi and his extremist partners, the regime will probably be strengthened for the time being. The failure of the coup is likely to discourage other opponents of the government.

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Somalia: The Supreme Revolutionary Council has reportedly turned down a Soviet offer to provide arms and advisers to the national police. Although the Somali Army is now equipped and trained almost entirely by the USSR, support for the police still comes from the US, West Germany, and Italy. The decision probably reflects the council's reluctance to have both the army and police dependent on a single external supplier. This policy was generally followed by previous governments. The distinction is no longer as meaningful, however, because the army's role in the coup has given it the dominant position in domestic affairs.

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Poland-Peru: An agreement to extend a \$10-million Polish trade credit to Peru was signed by banking officials in Lima on 18 March. The credit is to be used to buy Polish capital goods and could help ease Warsaw's unfavorable trade balance with Peru, which amounted to about \$11 million last year. Peru has received, but not yet utilized, similar credits totaling \$21 million from Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1969-70 and is presently considering a Soviet offer of \$30 million for agricultural equipment. Imports from Communist countries increased 46 percent in 1969 over the previous year to almost \$10 million, but represented less than two percent of Peru's total imports.

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